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Each lord selected some of his quasi-related dependent men and made them his lieutenants. A lieutenant[14] was responsible for carrying out his lord's instructions and helped in keeping the peace within the segment. Thus a dispute between two people in the same segment was referred in the first instance to the lieutenants of their lord, who reported their decision on the matter to him. If agreement could not be reached the matter was referred to the lieutenants of the lord's lord, that is, to the next superior segment, and so on until the matter came before the Paramount Chief. A lord could override the decision of his lieutenants if he wished. The Paramount Chief's lieutenants were responsible for administering the poison ordeal (*muavi*) when accusations of sorcery were made or when there was no other evidence.[15]

In the Nguni lineage, new inferior segments were formed mainly by differentiation between brothers, or between sons of different mothers. These types of differentiation occurred in the residential system and gave rise to new primal segments but alongside other processes of segmentation. The Nguni division of wives into great, right- and left-hand was developed into an arrangement whereby a man with many wives and many followers divided his wives into *bevies*[16] of some half a dozen wives each and allocated his followers to specific bevies. Each leader of a bevy had her junior co-wives, her own and their sons, and her lieutenants and other dependants acquired by capture. Each of these groups of followers under a senior wife constituted a separate segment and we shall refer to the wife in charge of a segment of this kind as the lady (*nkosikazi*) of the segment. Sons, lieutenants and even quasi-related dependants who were not lieutenants were all able to found inferior segments of their own within their lady's segment. Thus with the passage of time every flourishing segment became subdivided internally into several inferior segments, and in addition there was often what we shall term a *rump*, consisting of dependants not allocated to any inferior segment.

Most of the Nguni settlements were small, but on their march north the Ngoni lived in large compact villages containing over a thousand huts and several thousand inhabitants. Within these large villages people were arranged in terms of their segmentary affiliation and it is for this reason that we have spoken of a 'residential' system. The members of each small primal segment lived

[14] *Nduna*, pl. *nduna*. cf. Zulu *induna*.

[15] See Wiese, 'Expedição', pp. 470, 472, and 'Geschichte', pp. 188, 190.

[16] In earlier publications I used the term 'band' in place of 'bevy'. See my *Marriage*, p. iii.

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tiation of function between the senior lieutenants of the Paramount Chief, it is improbable that there were any special political offices outside the residential system.

Read mentions a political hierarchy with various titles.[15] At least in the Fort Jameson group, three of the four vernacular terms she gives were used in connexion with the residential system. The fourth, *amanusa*, was used in Zulu for messengers sent by a chief and a dialectical variant of this (*manyusa*) is so used nowadays at Fort Jameson. They have no executive authority and do not seem to have had any in the past.

Fraser, writing of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland, says that there were two groups of lieutenants, one composed of men who became Ngoni before the crossing of the Zambezi and which exercised civil power, and the other which included men of more recent incorporation into the Ngoni tribe and which supplied the war leaders. He implies that the war leaders did not take part in the civil administration.

There seems not to have been this distinction between civil and military lieutenants among the Fort Jameson group. Wiese's 'Minister of War', who was referred to as a Commander-in-Chief by other contemporary writers, was a segment head with the same responsibilities towards his people as anyone else. The regiments had leaders responsible for the tactical control of warriors, some of whom were recently incorporated men, and presumably Fraser is referring to them, but his statement that the man often chosen to lead the whole army had no voice in the council conflicts with Elmslie's account of the same place and period. The war leader, Ng'onomo, who is mentioned by Fraser, acted as regent on the death of the Paramount Chief in northern Nyasaland.[16]

The village as such had an importance independent of the size or order of segment of which it was headquarters or by which it was inhabited. There were no special terms for distinguishing the heads of large or small segments, for all were lords or ladies. But a special term[17] was used for a village headman, irrespective of the order of segment of which he was lord, provided he was not a lieutenant who had become head of the village in the absence of agnatic descendants of the founder. The use of a special term may have been an indication of the village headman's importance, part of which derived from the control he exercised over the cattle

[15] Read, 'Tradition', p. 462. cf. her account of the southern Ngoni in 'Standards', p. 16.

[16] Fraser, *Primitive people*, p. 32. cf. Elmslie, *Wild Ngoni*, pp. 121, 289.

[17] *Inhlonma*. In Zulu, a small or petty chief. cf. Read, 'Tradition', p. 462.

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kept at his village. Although his lords, and ultimately the Paramount Chief, had rights in the cattle, their day-to-day care was his responsibility and he had in practice the greatest say in their disposal, either for consumption, for payment of bridewealth, or for damages awarded against a member of his segment. He was head of the most clearly demarcated local group and was responsible for it to the heads of superior segments. The village was the cattle-herding unit, but for agricultural tasks it seems probable that in large villages the co-operative unit was the division. Agricultural work was directed, at least so far as women were concerned, by the lady of the division. I have no clear information on how domestic tasks such as cooking were organized within the village but it seems probable that individual women cooked for their husbands and for the children in their care.[18]

Fraser writes of the Ngoni of northern Nyasaland that a village headman had special ritual duties to perform when his village shifted to a new site, and Rattray reports a similar procedure for the southern Ngoni. Wiese mentions an oracular method of selecting a new village site among the Fort Jameson Ngoni, but is silent on whether or not the headman had a special role to play.[19] I could gain no information from my own informants about former practices, but nowadays the headman has no specific ritual to perform when a village shifts.

There is little evidence about the number of villages in the Ngoni State. There are a few conflicting observations on population and size and number of villages in the Fort Jameson group at the time of the conquest,[20] and we have estimates for the population of different groups in recent years, but estimates of the population and number of villages at earlier dates are all highly speculative.

The term for lieutenant, *nduna*, was used at all levels in the residential system and was applied even to men who had not yet founded their own segments. As already mentioned, a lieutenant was a quasi-related dependant, not a kinsman, of his lord who was selected to be in charge of a section of his lord's dependants and to carry out the instructions of his lord. Some of my informants referred to a ceremony at which a new office of lieutenant was created and a feather placed in the hair of the newly appointed man, but others appeared not to have heard of this custom. The

[18] Barnes, *Marriage*, pp. 15*f*. For the Ngoni of southern Nyasaland, see Read, 'Standards', p. 16.

[19] Fraser, *Primitive people*, pp. 203*ff*; Rattray, *Folk-lore stories*, pp. 36*ff*, 109*ff*, 196*ff*; Wiese, 'Geschichte', p. 199. In his 'Expedição', p. 480, Wiese associates this method only with a change of residence by the Paramount Chief.

[20] See pp. 103*f*.

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lord's dependants placed under a lieutenant's care became more specifically his dependants and eventually he appointed one or more of the men among them to be his own lieutenants. Thus it was possible for Z to be the lieutenant of Y and at the same time for Y to be the lieutenant of X. When Y died, his son became X's lieutenant or, if Y had no son, Z might succeed him as X's lieutenant.

A lord with but few dependants sometimes appointed one or more of them as his lieutenants without specifically dividing his dependants among them. Thus, a lieutenant might be appointed without the formation of a segment for him, and only later would he differentiate from the rest of his lord's dependants those for whom he was directly responsible.

The ranking of lieutenants was one of the least stable parts of the residential system. In a village under a lord there were lieutenants in charge of segments forming divisions within the village. As their segments grew in size, the lieutenants broke out of the village to found new satellite villages. A new set of lieutenants was gradually appointed to take their places in charge of the people remaining in the headquarters, and in the course of time the new set also broke away from the headquarters village.[21] Though they had moved out from the village the lieutenants still retained their positions as lieutenants within the primal segment of which it was the headquarters. Thus in a large segment containing many villages there was a long ranked roster of lieutenants, of which only the junior members still lived in the segment headquarters. Further proliferation of lieutenants sometimes took place when an heir succeeded as lord of the segment but did not found a new segment of his own. The new lord appointed his own lieutenants, so that within the same segment, and partly within the same settlement, there were two sets of lieutenants, one senior by time of appointment, the other enjoying the favour of the present head of the segment. When in these circumstances one of the senior set died, his eldest son sometimes had difficulty in asserting his position as lieutenant; and in this way the senior set, or part of it, lost control of the segment to the more recently appointed men.

It was in keeping with the expanding social boundaries of the State, and of the high degree of mobility within it, that there was no formally constituted council. Some contemporary accounts mention a tribal council, but it seems clear that until very recently, when the Administration tried to institute a council with defined membership, there has never been a legislative or executive body

[21] cf. my 'Fort Jameson Ngoni', pp. 197*f*.

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to which some men definitely belonged and others definitely did not. When matters of national importance needed decision, they were discussed at a meeting attended by at least all the lieutenants of the various bevies of the Paramount Chief, and all the spokesmen mentioned in accounts of meetings with Europeans during the later period and who can now be identified belong to this category. It seems possible that the heads of other major segments also took part in these discussions, and that other men listened to them even if they did not take part.

The role played in tribal affairs by brothers and junior sons of the Paramount Chief is not clear. The Paramount Chief did not himself actively intervene in many domestic matters until they were specifically referred to him by his lieutenants, and it seems possible that within their own segments other members of the royal house behaved in the same manner. At least nowadays some aristocratic headmen, not necessarily members of the royal family, behave in this aloof way. The head of the segment, like the head of the village, represents its common interest, its unity, and cannot intervene on his own initiative in the affairs of his people. He lies beyond the reach of their quarrels and disputes, and has to be brought into or informed of them in his judicial capacity by his lieutenants. Wiese says that previously members of the royal house were the real governors and judges in their segments, but that by 1891 in three cases out of four effective power had passed to their lieutenants and that they were merely 'show chiefs'.[22] This observation appears to confirm the thesis that with increased segmentation effective control passed from the head of the primal segment to the heads of the inferior segments within it, leaving the head of the primal segment as ceremonial head; but we do not know what evidence if any Wiese had about earlier conditions. It seems probable that before Wiese's time, as well as during it, the heads of large segments ruled through, as well as with the approval of, their lieutenants. So strongly does this principle still apply to the office of Paramount Chief that when recently a brawl began at a beer party attended by the Chief, he at once ran away, lest in the mêlée he might be forced to take direct action.[23]

Thus we see that in the Ngoni residential system, although segments were enduring social groups and the pattern of relationships once laid down could not be altered in formal terms, yet in fact there was a continual movement in the disposition of political

[22] Wiese, 'Expedição', p. 470.

[23] Gluckman reports similar conditions among the Lozi, where there is a maxim, 'The chief is not a policeman'. See his 'Lozi of North-Western Rhodesia'.

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648 territory, its amalgamation with North-Western Rhodesia, and the transfer of responsibility from the British South Africa Company to the Colonial Office. Statutory instruments issued under these and later Orders have provided legal backing for successive schemes of African Administration.

In 1900 the Fort Jameson Division, containing the country occupied by the Ngoni, Kunda and part of the Cewa tribes, was established as part of the East Luangwa District, stretching from the Nyasaland border to the River Luangwa. The names of these areas were later changed to Fort Jameson District and Eastern Province respectively, and there have been numerous changes in their boundaries during the last fifty years, though none of them have affected the Ngoni. To avoid confusion, we shall use the term District only in its modern usage. In charge of the African population of the District was a Native Commissioner responsible to a Magistrate, posts corresponding roughly to the modern District Commissioner and Provincial Commissioner. The Native Commissioner, with his assistants who were Whites, had a force of Native [202] messengers (otherwise known as boma messengers) attached to his office to convey instructions to the people of the District and to report irregularities to him. The Administrator, head of the [622] Administration, appointed chiefs in charge of tribal districts (smaller than the Administrative Districts already mentioned), and under them were district headmen appointed by the Secretary for Native Affairs. There were also district messengers who lived in [624] their villages, but assisted the Native Commissioner when he toured in their vicinity.

This scheme was regularized by the issue of the Native Commissioners' Regulations of 12 December 1908, made under King's Regulations of the same date. Minor amendments were introduced in 1913 and 1915, and a consolidating Proclamation was issued in 1916. This again was amended slightly in 1919.[13] The substance of the scheme was not altered until the enactment in 1929 of the Native Authorities Ordinance. A more comprehensive Ordinance, with provision for Native Treasuries, replaced this in 1936.[14]

The initiative in setting up, maintaining and modifying the system of administration lay with the Whites, not with the Ngoni, who indeed were only one tribe among many to whom the system applied. Yet the Administration endeavoured to enlist the support of chiefs and others who for the most part were persons of high status in their tribes. As early as 1905, the Administrator wrote of an

[13] Proclamations No. 3 of 1913, 11 of 1915, 8 of 1916, and 6 of 1919.
[14] Ordinances No. 32 of 1929, 9 of 1936.

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557 This process was facilitated by the actions of some heads of major
648 segments. It had always been correct procedure for one important person to deal with another through intermediaries, at least in the
[624] opening stages of negotiation, so that lieutenants and others were frequently sent as ambassadors for their lords to the headquarters of other major segments. There was particular point in adopting this procedure in dealing with the Administration since its demands on a man sent to it were unpredictable and apt to be onerous. Thus in many instances a lieutenant or other dependant was presented to the Administration as the headman of an area or a group of villages. This nominee was regarded by the Administration as the rightful leader of the area concerned, a belief often fostered by the nominee himself. In this way effective control of an area passed from the head of a segment to one of his dependants.

Unfortunately, few records of the early administrative arrange-
648 ments have survived. From 1883, when a British consul was first
114 appointed to Nyasaland, down to the defeat of the Ngoni in 1898, the doings of the tribe were of political significance to Britain, and were reported on at length in dispatches which are now public records. After 1898, events of similar importance within the tribe to those that had been reported earlier, the death of this lieutenant or the movement of that village from one site to another, were no longer of any interest to Whitehall or even to the Directors of the British South Africa Company. Thus there was a drastic reduction in the scale of reporting. At the same time the loss of sovereignty, of independent action, involved a reduction in the kind of events which were likely to be recorded. The Ngoni no longer made war or sold slaves. They did pay tax and work in the mines, but this they did not as an independent tribe but as part of Fort Jameson District and the Eastern Province, and such records as there are relate to these administrative units rather than to specific tribes. The B.S.A.
[439] Company lacked the long tradition of administration enjoyed by the Foreign Office and Colonial Office, and its reports were scanty by comparison. Thus the only published report of any kind on affairs in North-Eastern Rhodesia for the year 1905-6 is a mere fifteen lines long, and there is only one sentence on African administration: 'The conduct of the Natives has continued to be satisfactory.'[18] It is not until 1928 that annual reports on African affairs began to be published. Our account of Ngoni history from 1898 until recent times therefore cannot be as complete as we would wish.

[18] *Directors' Report and Accounts*, 1906, p. 7.

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7. *Villages*

Throughout Ngoni history the village has been an easily recognizable residential unit. Many of the pre-conquest villages, particularly those which were headquarters of major segments, were large clusters of huts with thousands of inhabitants. Although there are none of comparable size to-day, the concept of the village remains. The bulk of the present Ngoni rural population live in discrete clusters of huts housing between fifty and two hundred people. These we call villages. Each village is spatially distinct from the next, and generally is surrounded by garden land and bush.

The post of headman of a single village has never been very important in the scheme of administration. Under the 1903 scheme, district headmen were appointed in charge of groups of villages. After 1916 this term was dropped in favour of minor chief, sub-chief or headman of a group of villages. The men referred to by these names were the people who became county chiefs. Below them no individuals were appointed as leaders of social groups. From at least 1904 onwards there were men called district messengers who carried ornamental spears as badges of office and who carried out the instructions of the Native Commissioner. They had the functions of policemen and messengers, although some of them were heads of villages in their own right. In 1916, the title of these men was changed to divisional headmen, and they were described as being heads of groups of villages. Nevertheless, at least among the Ngoni, most divisional headmen continued to act merely as messengers and police, and leadership of groups of villages continued to rest with the variously styled minor chiefs. After 1929 the work of divisional headmen was taken over partly by the Native Authority messengers and partly by land messengers, who are Government (Boma) messengers sent to live rurally from time to time.

Yet although the office of village headman has not been of Administrative significance, the village has always been an important social group. We have seen that even in pre-conquest times, when the State as a whole was much more concentrated spatially than it is now, the fact of common residence was of significance within the segmentary residential system. The village had a central cattle byre. Its headman was known by a special term and once a primal segment had grown to village size the segment name was not applied to any residual segment within the headquarters village. The policy of the Administration, combined with a change in kinship relations among the tribe (a change from the quasi-

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the post of deputy is still of significance,[7] but in the life of the county the chief's deputy does not play a great part. One man appointed as chief's deputy went to Southern Rhodesia but no one has been appointed in his place and the chief manages without a deputy.

Another traditional post which still functions is that of chief's messenger.[8] This post is quite distinct from that of district messenger who is an employee of the Administration, and of Native Authority messenger. The district messengers and Native Authority messengers are full-time civil servants, while the chief's messengers are only called upon from time to time and are not paid. The county chief nominates one man for each cluster of half a dozen villages or so in his county to be responsible for informing the village headmen in his cluster of forthcoming county meetings and royal hunts. Sometimes a man who has been nominated accepts his post reluctantly, but it is difficult for him to refuse, and an ambitious man may welcome the appointment for the contact it gives him with his chief.

The royal descent-name *jere* is held by all patrilineal descendants of Zwangendaba's father and by the patrilineal descendants of various other people who were given the name by Zwangendaba or Mpezeni I.[9] Only two county chiefs do not bear this name. People who do not hold it regard all those who do as kinsfolk of the Paramount Chief, and from time to time in the appointment of men to office, the common people have insisted that not all the posts should go to men bearing this name. The Administration has regarded all men named *jere* in the same way, and in its efforts to counter nepotism has made similar stipulations. A simple dichotomy of this kind overlooks the divisions within the royal house and between the agnatic kinsmen of the Paramount Chief and those who have acquired the name by other means. Distant agnatic relationship may imply less identity of interest than close non-agnatic ties. Nevertheless the appointment of councillors and others with non-royal descent names does assist the notion that the people as well as the chief have interests in the common good and share the responsibility of pursuing it.

From time to time efforts are made to create new chieftainships. We have already mentioned one attempt.[10] The initiative comes usually from the junior kinsman of a chief to whom he has

[7] See my 'Village headman', pp. 100-6.

[8] *Lisuna*. cf. Zulu *i(li)ansi*, messenger sent by a king or chief.

[9] See Bruwer, *Mbiri*, p. 23, for the categories of persons bearing the royal descent name.

[10] See p. 140*f*.

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624
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PLATE VI. The clerk of a county Native Court checks the whereabouts of men on the tax register of a village with an important man in the village. Standing are a Native Authority messenger with fez, and an Administrative messenger. The village headman and some of his people sit in the background.

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PLATE VII. Litigants outside a county Native Court wait for hearings to begin.

[Facing p. 152]

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184 geneous or wholly integrated one. It is a plural society, in which
648 as yet the Administration represents the interests, albeit the enlightened interests, of one caste and the Ngoni belong to another. Ngoni share an interest in tobacco booms with their White and Indian neighbours, and they share an interest in the colour bar with distant tribes, but the field of common interest of Northern Rhodesia, or any other major geographical unit, as a multi-racial whole is still small. Ngoni society has not as yet become as wholly integrated into the larger society as have say, the rural districts of Britain, because the well-integrated larger society does not yet exist. Meanwhile the Ngoni still retain a considerable identity of their own, and the chiefs and the Native Authority provide the nucleus for that identity. As such, the posts of chief and to a lesser extent of councillor have more than mere administrative significance. Native [645] Authority officials are still bound by ties of kinship to their people [602] and are still the living embodiment of sentiments of group loyalty and unity. They may have a variety of roles to play which are recognized as distinct, but they still have little private life, in which what they do is of no public concern. In matters of religion [771] Ngoni identify themselves with their co-religionists, dead or living, in other parts of the world, rather than with their pagan forebears. But in political matters Ngoni still identify themselves with Zwangendaba and Shaka and their successors rather than with the British Administration and the Queen of England. They claim the battle of Jericho as one of their victories, but not yet Trafalgar.

There has always been a clear division between the African
202 full-time employees of the Administration and the chiefs. A formal
648 distinction was made as early as 1904 between the Boma messengers, later known as district messengers, attached to the Native Commissioner's office, and the chiefs and district headmen who lived in their own villages. There were also at that time district messengers, later called divisional headmen, who lived in their own villages but received a few shillings a year as stipend and acted as policemen and messengers for the Administration.

Nowadays the Administration employs Africans in a variety
647 of posts, the most important being those of messenger and clerk.
●624 The messengers are mainly stationed in Fort Jameson and Fort
648 Manning and visit the rural areas on specific errands or accompanying a District Officer on tour. From time to time messengers are sent to live at compounds scattered through the countryside, where they remain for a few months at a time and act as rural [693] constables, enforcing laws relating to such activities as cultivation

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and inter-village movement, reporting infringements to the local Native Court or to the Administration. When employed on these duties they are known as land messengers. They sometimes work in conjunction with employees of the Agricultural or Veterinary Departments. Clerks spend most of their time in the Administration offices but visit villages from time to time to collect tax and to carry out jobs, like selling maize in famine areas, which demand some knowledge of writing. In Nyasaland, however, it is customary for a clerk employed by the Administration to live at the Native Court for longer periods to collect tax. In both countries employees of other technical departments of the Administration, such as Water and Health, are occasional visitors to the villages. The two police forces, Northern Rhodesia Police and Nyasaland Police, are mainly concerned with law enforcement in the towns and on White farms, but come to villages when serious crimes, such as murder, have been reported.

Behind these African employees are the European administrators and technicians on whose orders they act. They form as it were a protective screen round their White superiors, and access to each White official is guarded by his Black entourage. Whites rely to a considerable extent on their Black assistants for information concerning affairs in the villages under their care, and villagers and townsfolk rely on the co-operation of their friends in the employ of the Administration when they seek its support. Thus the permanent employees of the Administration stand between two worlds. For the most part they are individuals who are seeking to rise, not in the indigenous rural order but in the new urban situation, in which smart clothes, wealth and a proper disdain for villagers who are content to live in 'the jungle' have high value. Their own way of life is at variance with both that of their White superiors and of the villagers around them.

Not all the African employees of the Administration who work in Ngoniland are themselves Ngoni, but even those who are not are for the most part linked by affinity to Ngoni villagers. Thus the relationship between the agricultural demonstrator or the land messenger and the people he has to supervise is not simply an administrative one. There is a tendency to widen the basis of every social relationship in all simple societies, and it is easier to do this when the social distance between the two persons involved is small. Thus non-Ngoni members of the African Civil Service who are posted to Fort Jameson often marry Ngoni women or discover some remote connexion of kinship which links them to others around them. Even Ngoni civil servants themselves tend to increase the

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939)1960
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463 foreman in charge of gangs of workers. All this last group
177 involved the earning, spending and sharing of money in-
[434] comes, but even more important in Ngoni eyes, they offered
[571] opportunities of exercising authority, and of controlling and directing others.

624 In local government and in the courts, which formed an
693 integral part of it, the qualities demanded were wisdom, ability to make decisions, expert knowledge of the law, skill in conducting cases and in summing up evidence, and knowledge of the people, so that their reactions to new measures and to difficult court decisions could be forecast. Certain
[827] women were thought of as inheriting this kind of judicial
[562] ability and were often turned to in private by their husbands, sons or brothers and asked to declare themselves in support of or against an important decision and to discuss its merits or demerits.

622 In choosing a successor to a chief the regents who were responsible for the selection looked for particular qualities of individual character as well as for evidence of the ideal Ngoni personality traits. Men who by right of inheritance could have succeeded their father were sometimes passed over because they showed characteristics which would make them a bad chief. This was one of the reasons why sons of leading men were watched so closely and corrected so sharply by the elders of a village who were noting their adjustment to the basic personality pattern as well as their individual character.

There were certain acknowledged ritual activities which demanded of the performer both a high degree of conformity to Ngoni personality patterns and special individual characteristics. On the death of a chief one of his sons or brothers was designated to become head of the 'elder' village which remained behind, when the new chief with some of the members of his father's 'house' moved out to found a new village. The 'one who stayed behind' as he was called was expected to be the epitome of all Ngoni qualities, and to have a good memory for, and an understanding of, Ngoni tradi-

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
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[P.1]

CHAPTER I

MARRIAGE IN THE TIME OF PEACE

1. *The old social structure*

IN THE DAYS before the European conquest, the Ngoni people lived in large villages each containing hundreds of huts built round a central cattle byre. Each married woman had her own hut and there were separate dormitories for boys and for girls. The huts were grouped into small clusters, each containing the dwellings of a few close agnates with their wives and children under the leadership of the senior male agnate. If the leader of the cluster was an important person, captives taken in war were allocated to him and their huts were included in his own cluster. Clusters were grouped into divisions, each usually under the control of a village lieutenant. Within the same division the heads of clusters were either agnates of the lieutenant or were people who had been captured by him or his father or who had been allocated to him by the chief and who were therefore bound to him as quasi-kinsmen. Several divisions made up a village under a headman or a regional governor. The village lieutenants were dependents or former captives of the headman or his ancestors, and were allocated to their divisions by him. Some divisions were under the control of junior kinsmen of the headman. Each village was attached to a royal headquarters where there was a senior queen. This arrangement of clusters, divisions, villages, and royal headquarters, which I refer to as the residential system, seems to have been similar to that found to-day among the Swazi.[1]

The system was a growing one. Brothers brought up in the same cluster gradually achieved their independence and split off to establish clusters of their own. The heads of clusters grew in importance and were promoted to village lieutenants so that their clusters became divisions, while divisions grew too large to be contained within the villages and moved off to establish themselves as separate villages. This process of expansion did not in itself affect the formal hierarchy of authority. The lieutenant who established his own village as a distinct spatial entity still remained a lieutenant of his lord, and deferred to him in matters of importance. The same word[2] was used to refer to a division of a royal headquarters, a division of a village, and a cluster within a division. The relationships of superordination and subordination between persons remained the same despite changes in spatial separation.

[1] Cf. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, p. 66.

[2] *Cigawa*, pl. *vigawa*, from *ku-gawa*, to divide.

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11. Headmen

The kin of the couple are not the only people in the village who are concerned in their marriage. In any matter of importance taking place in the village, attracting many onlookers and participants, there should always be someone to represent the 'owner' of the village, as the headman is also called. This is as true of marriage as of anything else. The intervention of the headman is clearly seen in such situations as the gall bladder ceremony and the entry into the wife's mother's hut. At these public affairs a lieutenant may be acting as master of ceremonies, even though he is not directly related to the couple. In most villages everyone is related in some way or other to everyone else in the village, but unless the marriage involves one of the close kin of the headman or his lieutenant, it is clear from the role he plays that he is present not because of his kinship to the couple but because he is a political official in the village. Thus at a gall bladder ceremony a lieutenant was called in to anoint the bride although he came from another division of the village. At another, a village lieutenant instructed the bride with these words: 'I am the lieutenant of the village. Fear me and I will also fear you. Work hard for [your father-in-law] Jesse.'

The headman of the village ought to be called to, or at least told about, any meeting to discuss a quarrel, and if the matter is taken to the court, he may be required to explain what steps he took to settle the quarrel in the village. His opinion on the character of the married couple is listened to. In the case of Daniel and Deborah, we have seen that at the first two meetings the headmen of the two villages were present, and although the headman of Daniel's village was not very closely related to him (he was Daniel's father's wife's father's wife's son) he took part in the discussion. At the third meeting the headman of Deborah's village was not called, but it is significant that the headman's father's father's brother's son was called in. The village was in danger of splitting at about that time, for a variety of reasons, and the headman's classificatory father was trying to form a separate village.

12. The Court

Beyond the ambit of the village lie the courts and the Administration. We have seen that it is to the court that married couples go when their troubles are greater than their kinsfolk can deal with. Beyond the courts there is always the possibility of appeal to the Administration, and from time to time the Administration intervenes in village affairs on its own initiative. Another external system impinging on marital affairs is that focussed on the missions. By contrast, the interests of White planters and urban employers are concentrated in fields other than marriage, and except in the case of employees of long standing, they do not concern themselves with the marital affairs of their labourers, save in so far as attention to these may conflict with a man's attendance at work. In the particular

10: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949) 1959
FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

621 usually in the male line, and, other things being equal, it is the eldest
622 son of the chief wife who succeeds his father. However, if the heir is a minor, the job of running the village may be undertaken by a brother of the deceased or by the first lieutenant of the village, and in this case difficulties may be placed in the way of the rightful heir should he claim his heritage on maturity. The usurper or his successors may take the name of the founder of the village as though there had been no break in the succession. There is among the Ngoni little of the
551 importance attached to the inheritance of names that is reported from other tribes of the region. Anyone may use the name of any of his patrilineal ancestors, so that, for example, most of the members of the royal lineage, men and women, use the name of Mpezeni on formal occasions in addition to their other personal names.

● 624 To assist him in his work a headman may nominate a deputy, and there may be in the village one or more lieutenants. The office of lieutenant in a large and prosperous village tends to be hereditary, but if there is no suitable successor the headman may appoint a man from another family to succeed. Many headmen have no deputy and some have no lieutenants.

621 In pre-conquest times the small residential group appears to have
582 consisted of the men of an effective minimal patrilineage,[1] their wives,
178 and the families of their prisoners of war. With the passage of time some of the senior captives became lieutenants of the head of the lineage and there was intermarriage between the aristocratic lineage and the captured families as well as between one captured family and another. This process of intermarriage has continued and I found, in every village I examined in the Northern Rhodesia counties, that each person is related to everyone else in the village, affinally and cognatically, in at least one way, while many people are related to each other by a number of different paths. In the Nyasaland counties this process of affinal assimilation has not been going on for so long, and here I encountered families of former captives who have not yet been linked by marriage to the family of their aristocratic captors.

Movement

361 A village is likely to stay in the same place for a dozen years or so.
166 During this time some of the huts will have fallen down and have been

[1] Fortes, *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 192: '... the effective minimal lineage, that is, the lineage of smallest span which emerges as a corporate unit in economic, jural, and ritual activities and is differentiated from other units of a like sort.'

/3 cont'd/
a point some fifteen miles south of Fort Jameson. It seems likely 175
that another eastward move was being contemplated when in 1898
they clashed with troops from Nyasaland, and were defeated. Al- 131
ready the territory under the control of Mpezeni stretched across the
Luangwa-Shire watershed, and with the establishment of British rule
in the same year, that portion of Mpezeni's domain lying across the
watershed became detached from the main portion which lay in
Northern Rhodesia. The Nyasaland section of the empire is now con- 631
trolled by two independent Ngoni chieftainships, both in the Fort
Manning area of Lilongwe District. In this Territory, the present
Paramount Chief is a great-grandson of the first Mpezeni.

/4/ Like all the Ngoni groups, Mpezeni's people are the result 648
of much intermarriage between the southern migrants and the Central
Bantu people with whom they fought. In particular, Mpezeni's
Ngoni intermarried a great deal with the Nsenga of Petauke District,
and it is the Nsenga language that is spoken to-day in Ngoni villages, 197
rather than the old Ngoni language, akin to Zulu, which is used only
in praises and songs. Cicewa is spoken in some villages which at
the time of the arrival of the Europeans had been incorporated only
a short time into the Ngoni state and had not had time to lose their
own Chewa tongue.

The principal difference between the Ngoni and their surround- 642
ing neighbours is in their form of centralised chieftainship, inherited
from father to son. Under the Paramount Chief are nine minor chiefs, 631
positions created by the British South Africa Company's administration,
and held by descendants in the male line of Zwangendaba and his
important officials. Until about 1920 there were divisional head-
men in charge of a number of villages, but these posts have now 602
disappeared. In a village there is a headman, an hereditary position 624
in the male line, and often one or two assistants, also hereditary
offices, descended from captives of the original headman who had
been promoted to responsible office.

In the old days one of the principal ways in which the diverse 701
elements within the Ngoni state were unified was through the regi-
mental system. Regiments were formed every so many years on a